

16 February 1961

APPROVED FOR
NOT RELEVANT
BUREAU OF THE

A HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

1997

Cuba

CUBA AND CENTRAL AMERICA

A group of six Soviet technicians left Moscow for Havana on 9 February to begin design work on the first two

industrial projects the USSR will build under the \$100,000,-000 credit extended to Cuba a year ago. One of the plants will repair various types of machinery and equipment and

PART I

OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST

Page 4 of 12

PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Page 1 of 17

PART III

PATTERNS AND PERSPECTIVES

Page 1 of 17

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

16 February 1961

produce spare parts for Cuba's deteriorating industrial establishment. No date was announced for the start of construction. On the same day a group of 88 Cuban students sailed from Cuba aboard a Soviet ship for five years of technical studies in the USSR.

A total of 14 Czech technicians were in delegations leaving Havana to visit Cuban industrial establishments in Oriente, Las Villas, and Matanzas provinces on 13 February,

[REDACTED]

Communist China, despite its own economic difficulties, is making a substantial effort to fulfill its commitments to Cuba. More than 30 Chinese-chartered merchant vessels are currently engaged in the Cuban trade. Most of these are being used to deliver the million tons of Cuban sugar Peiping promised to buy this year, but some are carrying Burmese rice and other commodities to Cuba.

[REDACTED] the European satellites are continuing to request Havana's cooperation in allowing them to re-export small amounts of Cuban sugar, which most of them do not need or want. Apparently the Cubans have agreed to a number of such transactions, but only where they do not interfere with Cuba's own exports.

[REDACTED] the bloc is carrying out its promise to pay for sugar imports at a premium price of four cents a pound.

A partial shipment of Soviet military equipment is ex-

pected to arrive in Cuba shortly. No further shipments, however, are known to be loading or en route.

Fidel Castro's 12 February speech to members of Cuban technical advisory councils--state-created workers' committees responsible for setting production norms in nationalized enterprises--included vitriolic attacks on alleged United States aid to anti-Castro forces. Castro asserted, "As of today Cuba is going to declare that if the United States has the right to promote counterrevolution in Cuba and Latin America, Cuba has the right to encourage revolution in Latin America."

Castro's statement probably means continuance of Cuba's covert assistance to leftist and Communist dissident groups in other countries, and also a substantial increase in the amount and variety of its propaganda efforts throughout the hemisphere. The construction of a powerful radio transmitter in Havana Province--which Castro cited as a source of "worry" to the United States during his speech--should materially enhance the Cuban propaganda potential in this field.

Overt attempts to overthrow other regimes would probably be discouraged by the failure in 1959 of several Cuban-based invasion attempts against Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti and probably by a desire to avoid providing an excuse for open retaliation against Cuba by the Organization of American States.

Castro devoted a considerable portion of his speech to extolling the economic accomplishments of his government, and he contrasted the "success" of the Cuban economic system with the "failures" and "problems" of the US economy. He also said that

PART I

OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST

Page 5 of 12

PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Page 1 of 17

PART III

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

16 February 1961

the "most difficult" economic task remains to be met--that of industrialization. He related that government plans to tackle this problem include the designation of 1962 as the "year of industrial planning and development," and the announcement of a four-year industrialization plan early next year. The emphasis which Castro gave to this subject may indicate an effort to pave the way for the eventual assumption of a new Ministry of Industry portfolio by economic tsar Che Guevara, who spoke at the same meeting.

Despite Castro's assertion that Cuba has no economic problems, a 7 February editorial by virulently outspoken Radio Mambi in Havana described "discontent and a certain malaise in various segments of the population" due to material shortages and spare parts problems. Among the economic irritants described in the editorial were the lack of parts for repairing automobiles, appliances, and machinery, and the growth of a black market in such consumer goods as salt, soap, razor blades, pencils, toilet paper, and other articles.

[REDACTED]
the Castro regime may still be suffering from a shortage of foreign exchange.

[REDACTED] Cuban diplomats [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] have complained that salaries of Cuban employees and embassy operating funds were months in arrears. Similar complaints have been made since the summer of 1960.

Meanwhile, the purges of "counterrevolutionary" teachers and professors in Cuban public schools and universities may be responsible for Castro's efforts to recruit instructors from other Latin American countries

and elsewhere.

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] an apparently successful effort to hire an unspecified number of Mexican instructors to teach in Cuba.

A blackout has been imposed on news of the progress of the campaign against anti-Castro forces active in the Sierra Escambray area in central Cuba. Government spokesmen have maintained that the regime will not issue a communiqué until "mopping-up operations" are completed and total victory is assured. Reports of heavy fighting and rumors of victories by each side are continuing to circulate throughout Cuba, and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] a growing number of casualties among both government and counterrevolutionary forces.

Unconfirmed reports that a large anti-Castro force has landed in northeastern Oriente Province are circulating in the area, and usually reliable informants have told US naval personnel at the Guantanamo Naval Base that roadblocks have been erected by the government on all roads leading into the city of Guantanamo.

A group of leading Arab Communists, who were among the 1,000 visitors participating in the commemoration of the second anniversary of the Cuban revolution last month, reported that Cuban Communist leaders described the alliance between the Castro regime and the Communists' Popular Socialist party (PSP) as "exceedingly close." The Cubans also told the Arabs that the PSP is, with Castro's consent, in majority control of all the "organizations which direct the masses," and they maintained that the Cuban revolution will

PART I

OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST

Page 6 of 12

PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Page 1 of 17

PART III

PATTERNS AND PERSPECTIVES

Page 1 of 10

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

16 February 1961

play the same role in Latin America as the Russian and Chinese Communist revolution did in Europe and Asia.

DECLASSIFIED
NOT RELEVANT
TO CIO OF THE

PART I

OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST

Page 7 of 12

PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Page 1 of 17

PART III

PATTERNS AND PERSPECTIVES

Page 1 of 10